

surgery, patients in Ontario are told they have to wait 6 months for surgery. Americans often get right away.

The patients at Kingston General Hospital in Kingston, Ontario, have been understandably unhappy with all the waiting they have to do. Fran Tooley was one of them.

Two years ago, Fran herniated three disks in her back and was told that it would take at least a year before she could consult a neurosurgeon about her injury which had left her in constant pain and unable to sit or stand for more than a half hour at a time. According to a story in the Kingston Whig-Standard, Fran's doctor referred her to a neurosurgeon after an MRI scan showed the herniated disks were affecting the nerves in her legs. The story went on to say that patients in Ontario can be forced to wait for up to 2 years and sometimes even longer for tests, appointments with specialists, or even urgent surgery.

Americans don't want to end up like Fran Tooley. They like being able to get the care they need when they need it. They don't want to be forced to give up their private health plans or to be pushed into a government plan that threatens their choices and the quality of their care. They don't want to wait 2 years for surgery their doctors say they need right away. And they don't want to be told they are too old for surgery or that a drug they need is too expensive. But all of these things could be headed our way. Americans want health care reform, but they don't want reform that forces them into a government plan and replaces the freedoms and choices they now enjoy with bureaucratic hassles, hours spent on hold, and surgeries and treatments being denied and delayed. They don't want a remote bureaucrat in Washington making life-and-death decisions for them or their loved ones. But if we enact the government-run plan, that is precisely what Americans can expect.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now begin a period for the transaction of morning business until 5:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Arizona.

#### FAMILY SMOKING PREVENTION AND TOBACCO CONTROL ACT OF 2009

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I take the floor this afternoon to discuss the issue of importation of prescription drugs and the amendment, which is No.

1229, which is pending but may be made nongermane because of a vote, if cloture is invoked.

There has also been some discussion about the fact that I am holding up the bill because of my desire for this amendment. I am not. I am simply asking for 15 minutes or even 10 minutes of debate and a vote. I understand there are other amendments, such as one by Senator LIEBERMAN and one by Senator BURR, that also should be considered. I wish to point out that I am not holding up the bill nor putting any hold on the legislation. The fact is, importation of prescription drugs is certainly germane and should apply to this legislation before us.

Last week, the majority leader was kind enough to say he would see about this amendment and when it could be considered. He has just informed me that he has discussed the possibility that it be brought up on the health care legislation when it comes to the floor. One, the issue cannot wait and, two, that is not an ironclad commitment. As much as I enjoy people's consideration around this body, from time to time I have found that without an ironclad commitment, sometimes those commitments of consideration go by the wayside. But I do appreciate very much the majority leader seeking to help me address this issue.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate begins consideration of H.R. 1256, it be in order for the Senate to consider amendment No. 1229 regarding prescription drug importation, the text of which is at the desk, and I ask that the amendment be considered in order, with 15 minutes of debate on the amendment equally divided between both sides, and that at the disposition of such time, the Senate vote on or in relation to the amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. In my capacity as a Senator from the State of Virginia and at the request of the leadership, I object.

Mr. McCAIN. I thank the Chair. I am not surprised. But if there is to be any allegation that this bill is being held up because of this amendment, that is simply patently false. In fact, I am more than eager to vote on this legislation because it has been before this body for a long time and it is a very clear-cut issue. The pharmaceutical industry has spent millions of dollars to sway lawmakers against the idea of drug importation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article from The Hill newspaper.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From The Hill, June 3, 2009]

PhRMA DEFENDS VULNERABLE DEMS

(By Aaron Blake and Reid Wilson)

What a difference a Speaker's gavel makes. Just a few years ago, before Democrats took control of Congress, the pharmaceutical industry was busy funneling millions to Republican candidates, at times giving the GOP

three dollars for every one headed to Democrats.

Over the last two cycles, though, drug makers have been much more generous with the other party. In the 2008 cycle, pharmaceutical companies gave the two parties about \$14.5 million each, and this year the industry has given \$714,000 to Republicans and \$721,000 to Democrats.

But the industry's main lobbying arm in Washington is now going beyond writing a check. The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, better known as PhRMA, spent the congressional recess running advertisements thanking four vulnerable Democratic freshmen for their early work in Congress.

The advertisements are running on behalf of Reps. Parker Griffith (D-Ala.), Bobby Bright (D-Ala.), Tom Perriello (D-Va.) and Frank Kratovil (D-Md.). They cite the four freshmen's votes for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and for extending healthcare benefits to unemployed workers, a measure contained within the stimulus package passed earlier this year.

PhRMA is also running advertisements for a few Republican candidates, though the group declined to provide their names.

Nonetheless, Democrats are encouraged by the group's ads on behalf of the four members, all of whom won in 2008 by the narrowest of margins.

PhRMA "has really stepped it up and shown a willingness to work with us where our policy interests intersect," one senior Democratic aide said.

The group isn't the only one that gives overwhelmingly to Republicans that has had to change its approach lately. In February, the Chamber of Commerce put out press releases praising Democratic votes in favor of the stimulus legislation, and the National Federation of Independent Businesses backed Democrats on the credit card bill last month.

PhRMA itself has grown more bipartisan. In recent years, Democratic strategist Steve McMahon has crafted many of the organization's advertisements, and former Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee political director Brian Smoot has been helping its efforts as well.

The group said the ads are part of a year-long campaign run in conjunction with the Healthcare Leadership Council. Both groups say they "share the goal of getting a comprehensive healthcare reform bill on the president's desk this year," according to PhRMA Senior Vice President Ken Johnson.

Ken Spain, spokesman for the National Republican Congressional Committee, said the question going forward is "whether or not Democrats in Congress will choose to do for the healthcare industry what they have done for General Motors. That is a concern many in the healthcare community share with Republicans in Congress."—R.W.

No partnership among brothers when it gets down to promotions.

Republicans are Republicans and Democrats are Democrats.

Except, that is, when it comes to House members eyeing the Senate.

The start of the 2010 election cycle has been marked by a pretty overt attempt by House campaign committees—specifically the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC)—to push members of the opposing party into statewide races.

Problem is, those statewide races are pretty important, too. And when the pressure on people like Reps. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) and Mike Castle (R-Del.) pushes them out of their House seats and into their states' open Senate races, they could seriously hamper Senate Democrats' efforts to win those much rarer seats.